

SEAPORTS AND SOCIAL MEDIA

A comprehensive research and analysis of social media policy, the explosive growth during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the coming storm of AI.

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Abstract

This PPM capstone “Seaports and Social Media” is a comprehensive research and analysis of social media policy, the explosive growth during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the coming storm of AI. The paper is designed to focus on analyzing the social media policy and social media activities during and after the COVID-19 pandemic at PortMiami, Port Authority New York and New Jersey, Duluth Seaway Port Authority, and Port of Seattle. Also, the results of a social media survey, based on four metrics: 1) social media policy and AI, 2) social media platforms – preference, 3) frequency of creating new posts, and 4) frequency of tracking social media activities, help to illustrate the bigger picture of the management of social media platforms by the seaport community.

The findings of this paper can be used to formulate recommendations to port professionals about social media policy and AI and on how to strategically leverage and maximize the usage of social media platforms with a focus on economic, social, and environmental impact by targeting workforce development and job creation, cargo development, cruise, and community interest and engagement.

II. Background/Issue

Between 2000 and 2010, many social media platforms that we are using today were launched. For example, LinkedIn in 2003, Facebook in 2004, and Twitter in 2006. These social media platforms redefined how people connect, interact, and communicate. From a business standpoint, these social media platforms gave companies significant leverage to market their products and services more effectively. In just a few seconds, one post can reach millions of people. Digital marketing became the most strategic and cost-saving option.

It took some time to put in place the creation and implementation of appropriate laws and policies to regulate social media platforms. Still, so many aspects of the usage of social media platforms need to be addressed and regulated. In 2023, numerous lawsuits were brought by entities against social media companies, as evidenced in the examples below.

Like the tobacco, oil, gun, opioid and vaping industries before them, the big U.S. social media companies are now facing lawsuits brought by public entities that seek to hold them accountable for a huge societal problem — in their case, the mental health crisis among youth. (Johnson, Gene, 2023)

Besides lawsuits filed by individuals, Meta, Google, and other companies that own social media platforms face claims from schools that they cause negative impacts on students' mental health. Companies designed their social media platforms to boost profits by maximizing users' time spent on the platforms, according to a claim by the Seattle public school system. (Llamas, Michelle, 2023)

Dr. Ofir Turel, a leading researcher in technology addiction and an associate professor at CSU Fullerton, says compulsively checking Instagram, Facebook and Twitter isn't just fun — it could be hurting our brains. (Ricci, Jeanne, 2018)

Most social media companies fail to include in their social media policy that these platforms can become addictive and harmful, particularly to young adults. Many young people prefer to spend time on social media instead of reading a book, playing sports, attending social events, and other outdoor activities.

A Gallup survey of more than 1,500 adolescents found that 51% of U.S. teenagers spend at least four hours per day using a variety of social media apps such as YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, Facebook, and X (formerly Twitter). This use amounts to 4.8 hours per day for the average U.S. teen across seven social media platforms tested in the survey. (Rothwell, Jonathan, 2023)

These social media lawsuits do not have a direct link with the seaport community. However, it may affect how the community perceives organizations that are using these platforms to promote their services or products as a strategic marketing campaign.

This paper is designed to showcase the opportunity for the seaport community to address legal, educational, mental health, age limits, social, and economic aspects in their social media policy. Also, to be proactive by understanding that AI is already part of social media platforms, a port's social media policy should address the usage of AI. Failure to cover all the aspects of social media policy can represent some serious threats to a seaport.

The context of this paper is to identify key elements that are missing from the social media policy of four seaports: PortMiami, Port Authority New York and New Jersey, Duluth Seaway Port Authority, and Port of Seattle. The four seaports were selected based on geographic position and their different

approaches to social media policy and the tracking system to monitor social media activities. The four seaports do not represent the full picture of the usage of social media platforms by all the seaports in the U.S. However, these four cases will help to generate key findings that can be used as a model for many other seaports.

The research also involved collecting data, via a survey, from 41 participants. 70% of the participants were seaport representatives. Special thanks to my PPM colleagues for their contributions. 30% of the participants were a mix of logistics companies and shipping lines. The results of the survey illustrate a bigger picture for a better understanding of seaports and their social media policy.

This research paper can also help port professionals understand and value the usage of social media platforms as powerful marketing tools that can be strategically leveraged and maximized. I hope this research paper can serve as a wakeup call to understand the value and the role that social media platforms have today, tomorrow, and in the long term.

III. Four Case Studies – Social Media Policy

Each port is unique. The differences can be related to geographic location, type of operations, type of cargo, landlord port or port authority, and so many other criteria. Overall, each port can use a unique marketing strategy. However, in the digital world, all seaports must comply with the same policies and regulations. For instance, Instagram does not have a specific policy for the seaports on the West Coast and a different one for those on the East Coast. The followers/users are everywhere. The social media policy of a seaport should align with the organization's goals, protocol, industry standards, and legal requirements. It is imperative that a seaport's social media policy covers all legal aspects to protect the seaport, avoid lawsuits, and facilitate a more effective engagement with the virtual port community.

PortMiami

Under Florida law, all content on these Social Media pages are subject to the public records law, [Chapter 119, Florida Statutes](#). By becoming a fan of these pages, posting comments, or messaging these pages, your information will be a matter of public record. Miami-Dade County is required to retain this information in accordance with the State of Florida retention schedule. This may include information on your own page. (Miami-Dade County, n.d.)

Miami-Dade County recognizes and appreciates the rights of all members of our online community to free speech and freedom of expression. This page and all comments posted, however, are regularly monitored by administrators and, while comments will not be edited by County personnel, a comment may be deleted if it violates the social media policy described here. (Miami-Dade County, n.d.)

Comments should be related to the posted topic for the social media page or post. Social media

accounts are not meant for comments that do not directly relate to the purpose or topic of the social media website or for service requests. For general comments or communications concerning a department, please contact 311 or on X at [@miamidade311](#). (Miami-Dade County, n.d.)

The following is prohibited on all Miami-Dade County social media pages:

- The use of obscene, crude, defamatory, threatening, sexually prurient or harassing language
- Personal attacks of any kind or offensive comments that advocate unlawful discrimination based on race, creed, color, national origin, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, physical or mental disability.
- Comments advocating illegal activity or posting of material that violates copyrights or trademarks of others.
- Personally identifiable information; material of a sexually prurient nature; commercial solicitations unless on behalf of the County
- Statements that endanger public health, safety and security or statements that encourage, provide advice for, or solicit the commission of a criminal act.
- Content that violates intellectual property or copyright laws
- Comments promoting or opposing any person campaigning for election to a political office, or promotion or advertisement of a business or commercial transaction. (Miami-Dade County, n.d.)

Users are subject to the host site's Terms of Use. Any user in violation of the Terms of Use will be reported. For more information, consult the host website's Terms of Use directly

– [Facebook](#), [X](#), [Instagram](#). This social media Policy is subject to amendment or modification at any time. Social media sites are a public forum, any content posted is subject to public records retention

and disclosure pursuant to Florida law. Opinions expressed by visitors to this page do not necessarily reflect the opinions of Miami-Dade County government. (Miami-Dade County, n.d.)

Observation and Findings

After reviewing and analyzing the social media policy of PortMiami, some key elements needed to be highlighted.

The policy mentions that administrators regularly monitor the comments on the social media pages of PortMiami. While comments will not be edited, they may be deleted if they violate the social media policy of PortMiami. This reflects the importance of maintaining a respectful digital community. How to keep the comments relevant to the industry?

It can be a challenge to understand what that means being relevant to the subject. Users have the responsibility to keep their comments relevant to the posted topic. The social media page of PortMiami has a focus on the maritime industry, logistics, and global trade. For example, any comments related to politics will be considered irrelevant to PortMiami social media policy. Such comments regarding politics can be classified as prohibited content.

The social media policy of PortMiami lists several types of prohibited content, including political views, hateful posts, racial comments, offensive language, personal attacks, advocating illegal activities, and so on. For this section, PortMiami can create a more descriptive list of prohibited content. All violations should be reported, and appropriate actions reinforced.

PortMiami is using the platforms of some social media companies. The followers for PortMiami social media pages are subject to the terms of use of the hosting social media platform (for example, Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram). The violation of the social media policy of the hosting social media platforms will be considered a violation of the social media policy of PortMiami as well.

Port of New York and New Jersey

The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey and Port Authority Trans-Hudson Corporation (PATH) (collectively “Port Authority”) uses social media channels as a tool to provide information and updates during incidents that impact its transportation services or facilities, and general information about the Port Authority and its facilities. If you are experiencing an emergency, please call 911. If you are looking for a more direct means to contact us, visit our Contact Us page or use our feedback form. (Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, n.d.)

The Port Authority social media channels are not always monitored. While we are unable to respond to each comment and post, we try to provide answers to questions or information during normal business hours, Monday through Friday. To protect your information, never share account numbers or other account information with us in public post or in direct messages. Please use our Contact Us page or feedback form to share this information with us.

Please be respectful when posting to our social media channels and be mindful that there are real people behind our social media accounts.

We also wish to remind you that your use of social media is governed by the rules, terms and conditions, and policies (“Platform Terms”) promulgated by the social media platform and your violation of the Platform Terms may result in the removal of your comment/post or other appropriate action. (Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, n.d.)

We may report or remove a post or comment that:

- violates copyright, trademark, or other proprietary rights.
- contains nudity or sexual content.
- contains abusive, hateful, obscene, or threatening behavior.

- encourages violence.
- is off topic.
- contravenes law.
- contains spam.
- is false or misleading.
- promotes the sale of a product or service; or
- infringes upon personal privacy.

We must note that the Port Authority does not agree with or endorse every comment posted on its social media channels. Therefore, any content and posts should not be construed to represent the views of the Port Authority.

This Policy may be updated from time-to-time. (Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, n.d.)

Observation Findings

According to the social media policy of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, the social media platforms are not always monitored. It is basically monitored from Monday to Friday. There is no guarantee that on weekends, staff members will refer to social media platforms for any updates – comments/posts.

The policy explains that the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey uses social media channels to provide information and updates, especially during incidents that impact transportation services or facilities. It also serves as a platform for sharing general information about the Port and its facilities. It is important that the followers/users understand the purpose of the social media platform for a seaport is highly focus on sharing useful information. The goal is not to entertain. Violation of the social media platform may have consequences.

Like PortMiami social media policy, Port Authority of New York and New Jersey social media policy usage is governed by the terms and conditions of the hosting social media platforms. Violations of these terms may result in the removal of comments by the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey or other appropriate actions by the platform.

Does the port have to endorse or agree with every comment? The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey policy explicitly clarifies that the Port Authority does not endorse or agree with every comment posted on its social media pages. Therefore, the content and posts should not be construed to represent the official views of the Port Authority. This is very important to clarify that the seaport is not going to agree with a post that does reflect or align with its policy.

Duluth Seaway Port Authority

The Duluth Seaway Port Authority (DSPA) recognizes that social media is an important part of many people's lives and may be how employees interact with family, friends, coworkers, and others around the world. However, use of social media also presents certain risks and carries with it certain responsibilities. (Duluth Seaway Port Authority, n.d.)

In the rapidly changing world of electronic communication, social media can mean many things. For purposes of this policy, social media is defined to include all internet and mobile-based applications, websites, and functions, other than email, for sharing and discussing information, where users can post photos, video, comments, and links to other information to create content on any imaginable topic. This may be referred to as "user-generated content" or "consumer-generated media." (Duluth Seaway Port Authority, n.d.)

Social media includes, but is not limited to:

- Social networking sites and apps such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and Next door

- Blogs
- Social news sites such as Reddit and BuzzFeed
- Video and photo sharing sites and apps such as YouTube, Instagram, SnapChat, and Flickr
- Wikis, or shared encyclopedias, such as Wikipedia
- An ever-emerging list of new web-based platforms generally regarded as social media or having many of the same functions as those listed above. (Duluth Seaway Port Authority, n.d.)

The following guidelines have been established for using social media in an appropriate, ethical, and professional manner. (Duluth Seaway Port Authority, n.d.)

- DSPA's social media posts, even on personal social media, can tend to reflect on our organization, our work, and our partners. Given this, employees are encouraged to use courtesy and respect in their posts, and avoid using disparaging, abusive, profane, or offensive language.
- If you identify yourself as an employee, make clear that the views expressed are yours alone and do not reflect the views of your employer.

In addition, the DSPA uses social media to highlight events, programs and issues related to the DSPA and Duluth Cargo Connect. A single voice is preferred on all online interactions. The Director of Communication and Marketing will direct the monitoring, updating, and posting on our social media accounts. (Duluth Seaway Port Authority, n.d.)

Generative AI (Artificial Intelligence) Tools

With the increasing popularity of generative AI chatbots such as OpenAI's ChatGPT and Google's Bard, it has become necessary to outline the proper use of such tools. While the DSPA remains

committed to adopting new technologies to aid our mission, when possible, we also understand the risks and limitations of generative AI chatbots and want to ensure responsible use. Our goal is to protect employees, clients, suppliers, customers, and the company from harm. (Duluth Seaway Port Authority, n.d.)

DSPA prohibits employees from including any trade secrets, intellectual property, or other confidential information in their queries and conversations with generative AI tools. Caution must also be used to avoid using AI in a way that may violate copyright or intellectual property laws. Please bring any questions to the Executive Director. (Duluth Seaway Port Authority, n.d.)

All AI-generated content must be reviewed for accuracy before relying on it for work purposes. If a reliable source cannot be found to verify information generated by the AI chatbot, that information cannot be used for work purposes. (Duluth Seaway Port Authority, n.d.)

Unacceptable uses include:

- Using any text created by an AI chatbot in final work products of any kind.
- Copying and pasting, typing, or in any way submitting company content or data of any kind into the AI chatbot.
- Failing to properly cite an AI chatbot when used as a resource. (Duluth Seaway Port Authority, n.d.)

Observation & Findings

After reviewing and analyzing the social media policy of Duluth Seaway Port Authority, some key elements are highlighted below.

If employees identify themselves as Duluth Seaway Port Authority employees on their personal social media accounts, they should clarify that their views expressed in their comments are their own and

do not, in any shape or form, represent the views of Duluth Seaway Port Authority. That should be clearly expressed. However, an employee should not engage in any comments that can affect the image of their seaports. Even though this is a personal account, there is still a moral responsibility to behave professionally. The community will always perceive the comments of an employee on his/her private account as an extension of the seaport. It is important that each port defines their scope of social media platform.

The Duluth Seaway Port Authority social media policy was able to define the scope of their social media platform. That is very useful to avoid any confusion. The social media platform as described by Duluth Seaway Port Authority is an internet and mobile-based applications, websites, and functions that allow users to share and discuss information through user-generated content on various topics. For the Duluth Seaway Port Authority, only two social media platforms are listed: LinkedIn and Facebook. Also, Duluth Seaway Port Authority stated that the port oversees one single voice for both social media platforms.

The Duluth Seaway Port Authority maintains a single voice on all online interactions related to the organization, events, programs, and issues. The Director of Communication and Marketing oversees and monitors the contents that should be displayed on both social media platforms, LinkedIn, and Facebook. It is very efficient from a management standpoint. When AI is implemented on daily activities of Duluth Seaway Port Authority social media platforms, it will be easy to have one single system to generate contents for all social media platforms.

Duluth Seaway Port Authority decided to include in their social media policy a section for Artificial intelligence (AI) in their social media policy. That takes in consideration AI-generated content. For example, when using AI-generated content, it is important that the content must be reviewed for

accuracy before relying on it for work purposes. This is a great example of being proactive that other seaports can following the same path.

Port of Seattle

The Port of Seattle (including Seattle-Tacoma International Airport and all maritime properties) uses social media to provide the community with updated news on Port and airport operations, events, and other timely information and to hear feedback from our customers. The Port of Seattle intends to offer a safe environment for community conversation. (Port of Seattle, n.d.)

The Port of Seattle invites you to join and participate in one of these online communities. And we encourage you to share your experience or just let us know how we are doing. (Port of Seattle, n.d.)

Privacy Policy and Disclaimer

Any person accessing, browsing, and using a Port of Seattle Social Media site accepts without limitation or qualification, these Social Media Policies (hereafter "Policies"). These terms and conditions apply only to the Social Media sites (defined here as third-party hosted online technologies that facilitate social interaction and dialogue, such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Instagram, and any other future platforms) that are managed by the Port of Seattle.

The Port of Seattle maintains the right to modify these Policies at any time without notice. Any modification is effective immediately upon posting the modification on this Social Media Policy page unless otherwise stated. Continued use of a Port of Seattle Social Media site following the posting of any modification signifies acceptance of such modification. (Port of Seattle, n.d.)

All users of the Port of Seattle's Social Media sites also must comply with the native platform's own Privacy Policy (for example, you must comply with Twitter's Privacy Policy if you are using our Twitter site). The Port of Seattle cannot change or control a third-party site's privacy policy. The Port of

Seattle also has no control over content, commercial advertisements, or other postings produced by the native platform that appear on the Port's Social Media site as part of the site's environment. (Port of Seattle, n.d.)

The Port of Seattle operates and maintains its Social Media sites as a public service to provide information about Port programs, services, projects, issues, events, and activities. The Port assumes no liability for any inaccuracies these Social Media sites may contain and does not guarantee that the Social Media sites will be uninterrupted, permanent, or error-free. These sites are limited public forums and all posted content is reviewed and moderated by Port staff for compliance with this posted social media policy. (Port of Seattle, n.d.)

All content posted on the Port of Seattle social media channels is archived and saved to comply with the Washington State Public Records Act. Any person posting on the Port's social channels has no guarantee of privacy now or in the future with respect to a posting. (Port of Seattle, n.d.)

Port of Seattle Social Media Policy

The Port of Seattle social media sites are intended to serve as a forum for communication between the public and the Port of Seattle. While the Port welcomes comments, please be advised that Port staff do not respond to all comments. (Port of Seattle, n.d.)

A comment posted by the public on any Port of Seattle social media account is the opinion of the commenter or poster only and does not imply endorsement of, or agreement by the Port. In addition, any interaction by or with the Port on its Social Media Accounts (including, but not limited to, shares, likes, and follows) does not constitute official endorsement on behalf of the Port of Seattle. (Port of Seattle, n.d.)

Social Media and Public Records

All posts and comments on the Port of Seattle social media channels are public records subject to public disclosure under the Washington State Public Records Act. Any content posted on social channels that is related to Port business, including a list of subscribers, and posted communication, is a public record. The Port advises visitors not to post sensitive personal information like home addresses and personal email addresses on any Port social media account. (Port of Seattle, n.d.)

Visitor Posting Policy

Comments or responses that violate the policies set forth by the Port or the native platform could be deleted or reported to the platform it's posted on for review. By using social media, you implicitly agree to abide by the Port of Seattle's policies and those set forth by the platform you are posting on. (Port of Seattle, n.d.)

The Port's social media sites should remain family friendly, so please keep your comments and wall posts appropriate. You participate at your own risk, taking personal responsibility for your comments, your username, and any information provided. Any images or content that you post on the Port's social media are public records and can be republished by the Port of Seattle on any other media without compensation or liability. The Port will notify you of use and provide photo credit and a link to your social media account. (Port of Seattle, n.d.)

Visitors are prohibited from posting the following types of content on any Port of Seattle Social Media sites. The Port of Seattle reserves the right to restrict or remove any messages or postings with the following content and may block a user who posts prohibited content like: (Port of Seattle, n.d.)

- Comments not topically related to Port programs, services, projects, issues, events and activities, or the post being commented upon
- Obscene or sexual content or links to obscene or sexual content Illegal activity or encouragement of illegal activity
- Vulgarity, insults, and inflammatory content
- Content that is abusive, hateful, include unsupported accusations or personal attacks or is intended to defame anyone or any organization.
- Posts and comments that promote, foster, or perpetuate discrimination based on creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, status about public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability, or sexual orientation.
- Posts that contain personally identifying information or sensitive personal information
- Post with offensive terms that target protected classes.
- Posts that are threatening, harassing, or derogatory
- Religious statements, including comments that endorse or oppose any type of religious opinions or activities.
- Political statements, including comments that endorse or oppose political candidates or ballot propositions, are prohibited under state law (RCW 42.52.180)
- Commercial solicitations and endorsements or advertisements. This includes promotion or endorsement of any financial, commercial, or non-governmental agency.
- Posts that attempt to defame or defraud any financial, commercial, or non-governmental agency.
- Posts or links to irrelevant or inappropriate third-party content

- Comments that suggest or encourage illegal activity or threaten the health and safety of employees or users at any Port facility.
- Comments that violate intellectual property rights, copyrights, or the legal ownership interest of another party, including, but not limited to infringement of a copyright, trademark, or any registered mark. (Port of Seattle, n.d.)

All posts and comments posted on the Port's Social Media sites will be reviewed by Port staff for compliance. The Port of Seattle reserves the right to restrict, hide, report, or remove posted content that does not comply with these Policies. (Port of Seattle, n.d.)

Communications made through Port of Seattle Social Media sites in no way constitute a legal or official notice or comment to the Port or its partners. (For example, a social media post or comment that asks for public records will not be considered a public records request under RCW 42.56.) To get information about a topic, please submit a public records request to the Port of Seattle. (Port of Seattle, n.d.)

Copyright Policy

The Port of Seattle retains copyright on all copy, images, document, content, and other materials provided on Port of Seattle social media sites and the website. You may forward or reuse material for personal non-commercial use if you display the copyright symbol and include a line that credits the Port and identifies the source. For instance, "*©Port of Seattle Facebook page*" or "*Copyright Port of Seattle.*"

Commercial use of text, logos, photos, and other graphics is prohibited without the express written permission of the Port of Seattle. Use of the Port logo by any non-Port entity or non-governmental

use is prohibited without the expression written permission of the Port of Seattle. (Port of Seattle, n.d.)

Third Party Sites

The Port of Seattle's social media pages may include links or copy to third party social media or websites. These pages do not belong to the Port of Seattle and the information cited or found is not controlled by or endorsed by the Port of Seattle. The Port of Seattle is not liable for any third-party content posted on its social media feed. (Port of Seattle, n.d.)

Observations & Findings

After reviewing and analyzing the social media policy of the Port of Seattle, key elements are highlighted below.

The Port of Seattle retains copyright ownership over all content provided on its social media pages. Followers/Users may forward or reuse material for personal non-commercial use with proper attribution based on the social media policy. It is important to provide some details about personal non-commercial use. Many influencers on social media are using personal accounts to make money. I think there should be a clear explanation about how influencers can reuse material from a seaport social media page for non-commercial usage.

How to reach the community and stay engaged? The Port of Seattle uses social media to provide the community with useful information related to the port activities. Also, the Port of Seattle encourages community members to share their testimonials and provide feedback. A port is basically a strong economic engine for the community. It is important that the social media policy defines how to engage with the community. The community should be able to understand there are specific rules for commercial use.

The Port of Seattle in their social media policy states that commercial use of post, comments, logos, photos, and contents is prohibited without the express written permission of the Port of Seattle. That can help to limit some of the liabilities.

The Port of Seattle does not guarantee the accuracy, uninterrupted service, or permanence of content on its social media pages. The contents must be reviewed and moderated by the social media division for compliance with the Port of Seattle social media policy. How to address the content from third-party link?

The Port of Seattle acknowledges that its social media pages may include links or content related to third-party social media or other company website. The Port does not control or endorse the information found on these third-party sites and is not liable for their content. This is very important that all the seaports clearly explain their position regarding third-party links. Also, communication via a seaport social media page should be addressed.

Communications made through Port of Seattle Social Media sites do not constitute legal or official notices or comments to the Port or its partners. For official requests or inquiries, users are advised to submit a public records request to the Port. Social media platforms are not for official use. They are great tools for the seaports to communicate with the port community and any other interested stakeholders. For any official request, it is imperative that the official channels of communication, for example email, be used.

Recommendations – Social Media Policy

The following recommendations are based on key observations and findings after reviewing and analyzing the four case studies for the social medial policy of PortMiami, Port Authority New York and New Jersey, Duluth Seaway Port Authority, and Port of Seattle.

1. A social media policy should address all the legal aspects to protect the organization and the community. According to an article published by Maddie Roderick for The Realtime Report, the average social media privacy policy takes an hour to read (Roderick, Maddie, 2020). Unfortunately, people do not want to read a social media policy. However, when there is a red flag, the users/followers must spend valuable time to understand and learn about what is allowed and prohibited on that platform.
2. The social media policy for the seaport community should define the social media purpose. For example, the purpose of social media platforms is to provide information and updates, especially during incidents that impact transportation services or facilities. Two out of the four case studies for social media policy, Port of New York & New Jersey and Port of Seattle, have a section that explains the purpose of the social media platforms.
3. The policy should list the social media platforms that the social media policy covers. One out of the four case studies for social media policy, Duluth Seaway Port Authority, has a section that explains their social media. To avoid any confusion, the policy should explicitly define social media.
4. A social media policy should highlight that social media usage is governed by the terms and conditions of the social media platforms themselves (for example LinkedIn, Instagram, and Facebook Platform Terms). Violations of these terms may result in the removal of comments or other appropriate actions by the platform. That can be very useful to avoid any confusion. A seaport has an account with Instagram, the follower of this account must comply by the policy first of Instagram, then by the policy of the port. This part should be clearly explained by the social media policy.
5. A social media policy should clearly explain that if employees identify themselves as port employees on their personal social media accounts, they should clarify that their views

expressed in their posts are their own and do not necessarily represent the views of their employer.

6. A social media policy should mention that the seaport does not guarantee the accuracy, uninterrupted service, or permanence of content on its social media sites. Content is reviewed and moderated by Port staff for compliance with the posted social media policy.
7. A social media policy should explain that the seaport acknowledges that its social media pages may include links or content related to third-party social media or websites. The Port does not control or endorse the information found on these third-party sites and is not liable for their content.
8. The social media policy should state that the contents that the seaports post on these social media platforms are intended to a specific audience with knowledge in the maritime industry. Our posts are not to entertain. The goal is to inform and educate. The seaports are not using any manipulative content to attract users. All users/followers shall be responsible and accountable for the time spent on our social media accounts.
9. The social media policy should explain that a seaport retains copyright ownership over all content provided on its social media sites and website. Users may forward or reuse material for personal non-commercial use with proper attribution.
10. Finally, a social media policy should have a section that takes into consideration the implementation of AI in social media platforms. One out of the four cases studies for social media policy, Duluth Seaway Port Authority decided to include a section for AI in their policy.

Below is a sample from Duluth Seaway Port Authority that can be used by other seaports regarding social media policy and AI. (Duluth Seaway Port Authority, n.d.)

Generative AI (Artificial Intelligence) Tools – DSPA sample

With the increasing popularity of generative AI chatbots such as OpenAI’s ChatGPT and Google’s Bard, it has become necessary to outline the proper use of such tools. While the DSPA remains committed to adopting new technologies to aid our mission, when possible, we also understand the risks and limitations of generative AI chatbots and want to ensure responsible use. Our goal is to protect employees, clients, suppliers, customers, and the company from harm.

DSPA prohibits employees from including any trade secrets, intellectual property, or other confidential information in their queries and conversations with generative AI tools. Caution must also be used to avoid using AI in a way that may violate copyright or intellectual property laws. Please bring any questions to the Executive Director.

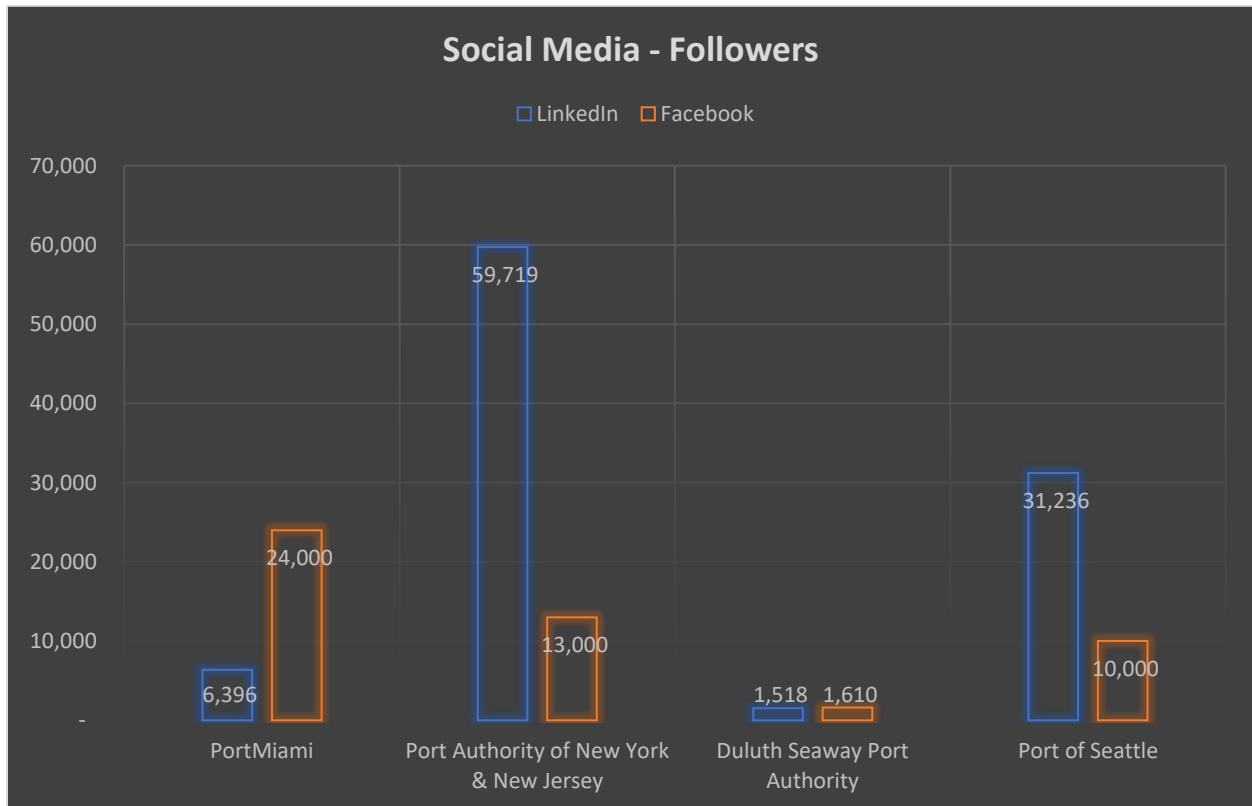
All AI-generated content must be reviewed for accuracy before relying on it for work purposes. If a reliable source cannot be found to verify information generated by the AI chatbot, that information cannot be used for work purposes.

Unacceptable uses include:

- Using any text created by an AI chatbot in final work products of any kind.
- Copying and pasting, typing, or in any way submitting company content or data of any kind into the AI chatbot.
- Failing to properly cite an AI chatbot when used as a resource.

Social Media Report

This section focuses on the social media followers reports for the four ports during and after COVID-19 pandemic.



***Data was collected by visiting the social media platform of each seaport listed above.**

Only two social media platforms (LinkedIn and Facebook) are shown in the table above because the Duluth Seaway Port Authority currently only uses LinkedIn and Facebook. For comparative purposes, the table focuses only on the social media platforms used by the four targeted seaports; PortMiami, Port Authority New York and New Jersey, Duluth Seaway Port Authority, and Port of Seattle.

PortMiami

PortMiami is the leading by number of followers for Facebook, following the Port Authority New York and New Jersey.

According to an interview I had with Andria Muñiz-Amador, Director of Marketing, Miami-Dade County. She oversees the marketing division for the entire Miami-Dade County. During COVID-19, Mrs. Muniz was the Director of Marketing at PortMiami. (Muniz-Amador, 2023)

Mr. Muniz explained that due to COVID-19 pandemic, PortMiami did not use about \$1 million-dollar, on average the annual budget for Marketing Division. Instead, The Marketing Division created a strategy that was focused only on a digital marketing campaign via social media platforms to stay engaged with the community. The impact was significant. (Muniz-Amador, 2023)

Social media platforms (Twitter-Instagram-Facebook) for PortMiami by the numbers – pre-COVID-19, during COVID-19, and today. (Marketing - PortMiami, 2023)

Pre-COVID-19

- Twitter followers accounted for about 10,000.
- Instagram followers accounted for about 8,000.
- Facebook followers accounted for about 9,000.

During COVID-19

- Twitter followers accounted for 18,262 which was an increase of 83% over pre-COVID-19 pandemic.
- Instagram followers accounted for 13,826 which was an increase of 73% over pre-COVID-19 pandemic.
- Facebook followers accounted for 14,647 which was an increase of 63% over pre-COVID-19 pandemic.

All three major social media platforms for PortMiami saw a double digit increase during COVID-19.

Today

- Twitter followers accounted for 19,538 which was an increase of 7% over during COVID-19 period.
- Instagram followers accounted for 18,000 which was an increase of 30% over during COVID-19 period.
- Facebook followers accounted for 24,000 which was an increase of 64% over during COVID-19 period.

Even though the frequency of social media activities is less than during COVID-19 pandemic, Today the trends are continued.

Port Authority New York and New Jersey

The Port Authority New York and New Jersey is leading by number of followers for LinkedIn and following by the port of Seattle.

According to Jennifer Baez, Supervisor, Social Media, Marketing Department for Port Authority New York/New Jersey, "Pre-Covid the corporate Instagram account for the Port Authority New York/New Jersey had roughly 11k followers. We are now at 16.2k followers. However, keep in mind that since Covid we've had a few paid advertising buys on the platform so that has contributed somewhat to the increase." (Baez, Jennifer, 2023)

"For Port, the messaging pre-Covid focused what we were doing and how we supported the stakeholders at our ports. During and post-Covid, we concentrated on our strength in keeping the region moving and how we grew to consistently be ranked either 1 or 2 in the U.S." (Baez, Jennifer, 2023)

Duluth Seaway Port Authority

The story of Duluth Seaway Port Authority is very inspiring. According to Jayson Hron, Director of Communication and Marketing, Duluth Seaway Port Authority.

The social media platforms basically started from zero followers in April 2019, when formally launched our social media platforms. Since then, we've climbed to:

Duluth Seaway Port Authority (LinkedIn followers): 1,514 (+522 in the past 365 days).

Duluth Cargo Connect (LinkedIn followers): 1,422 (+365 in the past 365 days).

Duluth Cargo Connect (Facebook followers): 1,610

So, while it's far from mathematically precise, it could be said that we've averaged more than 300 followers gained per year on every platform since their launch in April 2019. (Hron, Director of Communication and Marketing, 2023)

Port of Seattle

When we combine both accounts, LinkedIn and Facebook, Seattle is ranked as number 2, just after Port Authority New York and New Jersey.

Community feedback helped shape the Port Seattle's initial relief and recovery response during COVID-19. Social media was one of the tools the port used to stay engaged with the community.

III. Social Media & AI - Survey

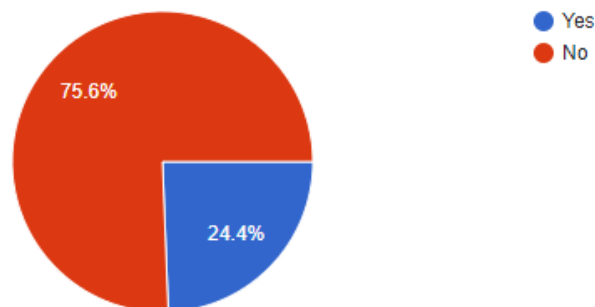
The social media & AI survey that I conducted summarized the inputs collected from 41 participants. 70% or 29 of the participants were seaports representatives. Special thanks to my PPM colleagues for their contributions. 30% or 12 of the participants were a mix of logistics companies and shipping lines.

The result of this survey gives a bigger picture for a better understanding about seaport and social media. This survey was focusing on four metrics: social media policy and AI, social media platforms – preference, frequency of creating new posts, and frequency of tracking social media activities.

Social Media Policy and AI

Does the Social Media Policy of your organization cover the implementation of AI?

41 responses



(Survey, 2023)

- 76% or 31 of the participants said that their social media policy does not cover the implementation of AI in social media.
- 24% or 10 of the participants said that their social media policy does cover the implementation of AI in social media.

I had the honor to interview Jayson Hron, Director of Communication and Marketing, Duluth Seaway Port Authority. (Hron, Director of Communication and Marketing, 2023)

When I asked Mr. Hron what the mindset behind the decision to include AI in their social media policy, this is what he responded.

“I think just what you said. I think what was driving the mindset, it was just it becomes obvious that AI is coming, it is here, and it is something we should address. I think the genesis was, as we, the staff, become more aware of AI. And some of it, it is really to generate content. Ideas started to flash through our mind on projects we were working on. Like...I heard companies use this AI thing to kind of generate that kind of stuff. It was so organic in that sense.” (Hron, Director of Communication and Marketing, 2023)

“As a result, we started thinking this is absolutely something that is going to be part of our world. As such, we should probably have a policy on it, because it has potential to be beneficial. If it is being used appropriately. And some cases perhaps, it also has potential to be damaging. If it is being used inappropriately or recklessly in some cases.” (Hron, Director of Communication and Marketing, 2023)

Then, he continued to explain.

“I think what you saw. What you read about the policy regarding AI on our website for the Duluth Seaway Port Authority. It is just kind of a first step of recognizing AI. These tools are emerging, and we need to have at least a basic policy in place to govern people and the usage of it. We need to recognize it for what it does represent. We can't just auto generate contents and assume they are correct and start putting them out there.” (Hron, Director of Communication and Marketing, 2023)

“That just a baseline level of policy making to kind of guide usage of that tool in a way, hopefully, it is safe and beneficial, not damaging, and reckless.” (Hron, Director of Communication and Marketing, 2023)

When is Duluth Port Authority planning to start the implementation of AI generated content in their social media platforms?

“Even though we already added a basic component of AI in our policy. I don’t see Duluth Seaway Port Authority to be an early adapter.” (Hron, Director of Communication and Marketing, 2023)

I had the honor to interview Andria Muñiz-Amador, Director of Marketing, Miami-Dade County. She oversees the marketing division for the entire Miami-Dade County. During COVID-19, Mrs. Muniz was the Director of Marketing at PortMiami. (MunizAmador, 2023)

When I asked about social media policy and AI, this what Mrs. Muniz responded.

“I have to say that Artificial intelligence (AI) is going to be a critical component of the social media platforms. It is going to create more opportunities for digital marketing. It is important to start evaluating and understanding the impact that AI will have on the digital world. Somehow, we are going to start the conversation on how to address AI in our social media policy.” (Muniz-Amador, 2023)

According to NBC News, September 13, 2023, Elon Musk, one of the giants in the technology world, during a meeting with tech CEOs and senators, explained that artificial intelligence poses a “civilizational risk” to governments and societies. And then he delivers the most important sentence in my opinion “The consequences of AI going wrong are severe, so we have to be proactive rather than reactive,” (Wong, Scott, 2023)

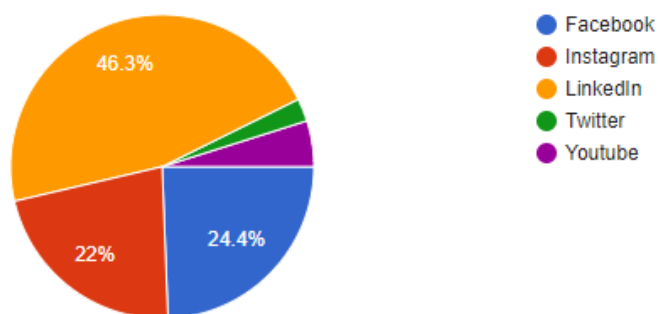
Policy makers have been reactive to the booming of new technology features. It happens, then we try to figure out how to regulate this innovation.

AI is here. It is still in a phase that policy makers can be proactive instead of reactive like Mr. Musk stated.

Social Media Platforms – Preference

Which one of the following social media platforms are you using the most?

41 responses



(Survey, 2023)

- The three social media platforms that most of the participants used the most are LinkedIn 46%, Facebook 24%, and Instagram 22%.

During my interview with Mr. Horn, I asked why Duluth Seaway Port Authority is using only LinkedIn and Facebook.

This was his response.

“Duluth Seaway Port Authority decided to use LinkedIn because it facilitates a more formal professional set up for business-to-business relationships. Also, it helps to engage with individuals, elected officials in a measured way. Facebook is more for general information to reach and engage with the community.” (Hron, Director of Communication and Marketing, 2023)

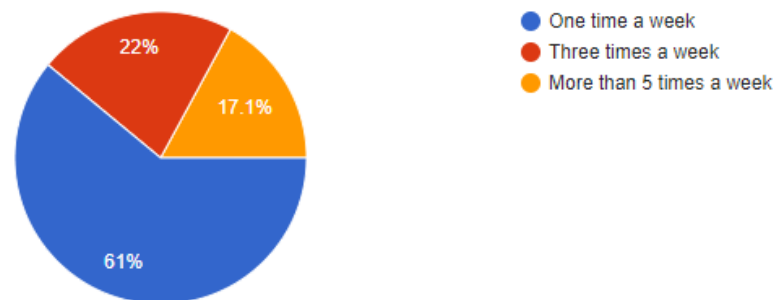
According to an article “Top Social Media Statistics and Trends of 2023” published by Forbes Advisor, the author, Belle Wong stated that the number of social media users worldwide has swelled to around 4.9 billion people globally. What’s more, this number is expected to jump to approximately 5.85 billion users by 2027. (Wong, Belle, 2023)

According to the same article, the most used social media platform in the world is Facebook, with 2.9 million monthly active users across the world. (Wong, Belle, 2023)

Frequency of Creating New Posts

How often do you create new posts on your social media platforms?

41 responses



(Survey, 2023)

- Groupe 1 - 61% of the participants create new posts just one time a week. Technically, the 61% of the participants are not active on the digital world. They cannot keep their audience engage. The interactions are very low.
- Group 2 - 22% of the participants create new posts three times a week. This not ideal, but in comparison to the participants (group 1) that create new posts one time a week, this is a step in the right direction for improvement.

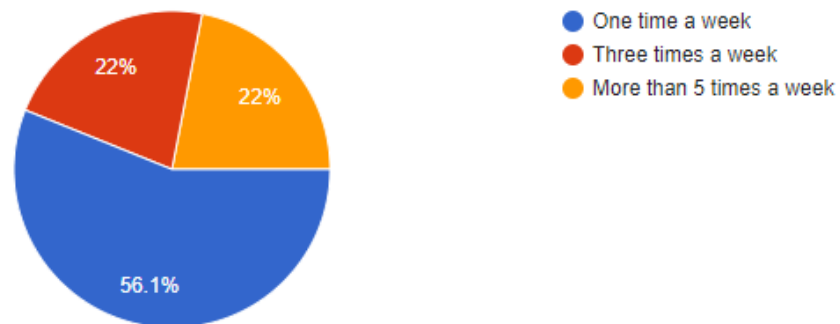
- Group 3 - 17% of the participants are present on the digital world. Their followers can receive new posts more often. They can stay engaged. This is where participants from group 1 and 2 should be.

AI can solve the frequency of creating new posts. AI auto-generated content can be implemented to create new posts. Without proper management it can represent a serious challenge at the same time.

Frequency of Tracking Social Media Activities

How often do you track your social media activities?

41 responses



(Survey, 2023)

- 56% of the participants track their social media activities one time a week. This observation is related to the frequency of creating new posts. It does make sense that if a seaport creates new posts one time a week, it also does track its social media activities one time a week. The results for frequency of creating new posts and frequency of tracking social media activities are related.

It does show that more than half of the participants are using social media platforms occasionally. No real strategy, no real engagement to connect via social media as a priority.

This survey shows so many areas for improvement. How can the seaports leverage and maximize social media platforms? This question will be addressed in the next section.

IV. How to Leverage and Maximize Social Media Platforms

To leverage and maximize the usage of social media, port professionals can build a smart strategy around economic, social, and environmental impact, by leading initiatives, partnering with local stakeholders, creating the narration, and then telling the stories via social media platforms. The seaports are basically economic engines. They represent significant economic drivers for their community. Social media platforms are just digital tools for communication, connection, interaction, marketing, and promotion. The quality of the contents keeps people engaged. A smart strategy to leverage and maximize the usage of social media platforms around economic, social, and environmental impact can have a focus on creating contents based on workforce development and job creation, cargo development, cruise, and community interest and engagement.

Workforce Development/Job Creation

PortMiami is the second economic engine for Miami-Dade County with a contribution of \$43 billion annually to the local economy and supporting more than 334,500 direct and indirect jobs in South Florida. It is recognized as the Cruise Capital of the World and Cargo Gateway of the Americas.

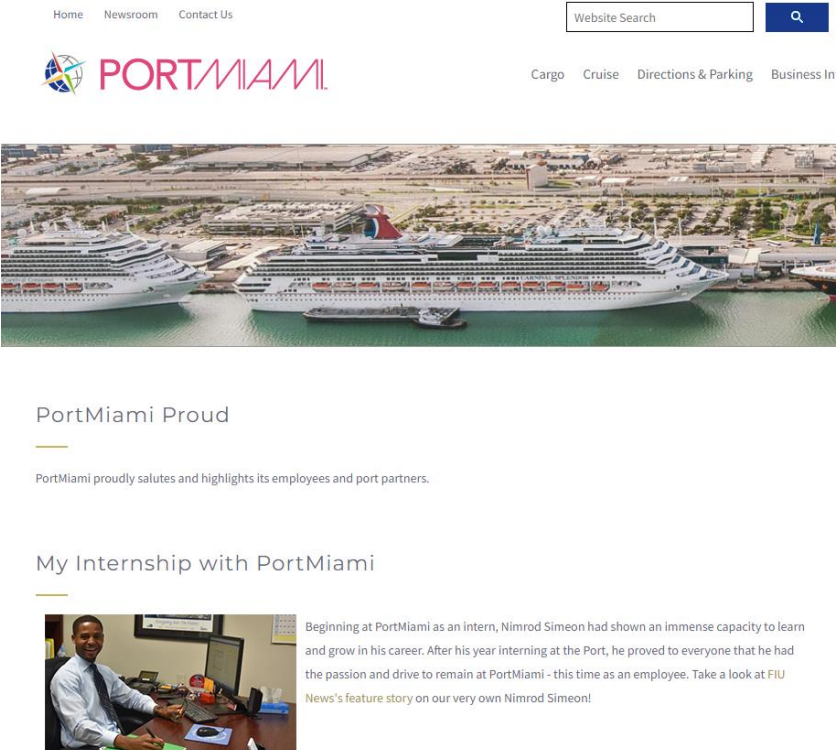
This statement about PortMiami has always a positive impact when people hear \$43 billion and 334,500 jobs. Just these two numbers can be used to create contents about what PortMiami represents for the community of South Florida.

Imagine, instead of just mentioning these numbers, PortMiami can create a series of short stories about all the different players that contribute to the \$43 billion. For example, short stories about how

much of the \$43 billion that the terminals, shipping lines, rail, trucks, and other players represent.

Also, PortMiami can create short stories based on testimonials of current and past employees.

My story as an intern was featured on FIU News. PortMiami decided to add it to a section call “PortMiami Proud” on their website. I received emails, phone calls from so many other students who were inspired by my story. I was able to mentor and help some of them to do an internship in the maritime industry.



The screenshot shows the PortMiami website interface. At the top, there are navigation links for 'Home', 'Newsroom', and 'Contact Us'. A search bar labeled 'Website Search' is on the right. Below the navigation is the PortMiami logo, which includes a globe icon and the text 'PORTMIAMI'. To the right of the logo are links for 'Cargo', 'Cruise', 'Directions & Parking', and 'Business In'. The main content area features a large aerial photograph of several cruise ships docked at a port. Below the photo is a section titled 'PortMiami Proud' with a sub-header 'PortMiami proudly salutes and highlights its employees and port partners.' Underneath this is another section titled 'My Internship with PortMiami' which includes a small photograph of a man in a white shirt and tie sitting at a desk, and a text block that reads: 'Beginning at PortMiami as an intern, Nimrod Simeon had shown an immense capacity to learn and grow in his career. After his year interning at the Port, he proved to everyone that he had the passion and drive to remain at PortMiami - this time as an employee. Take a look at FIU News's feature story on our very own Nimrod Simeon!'

(PortMiami , n.d.)

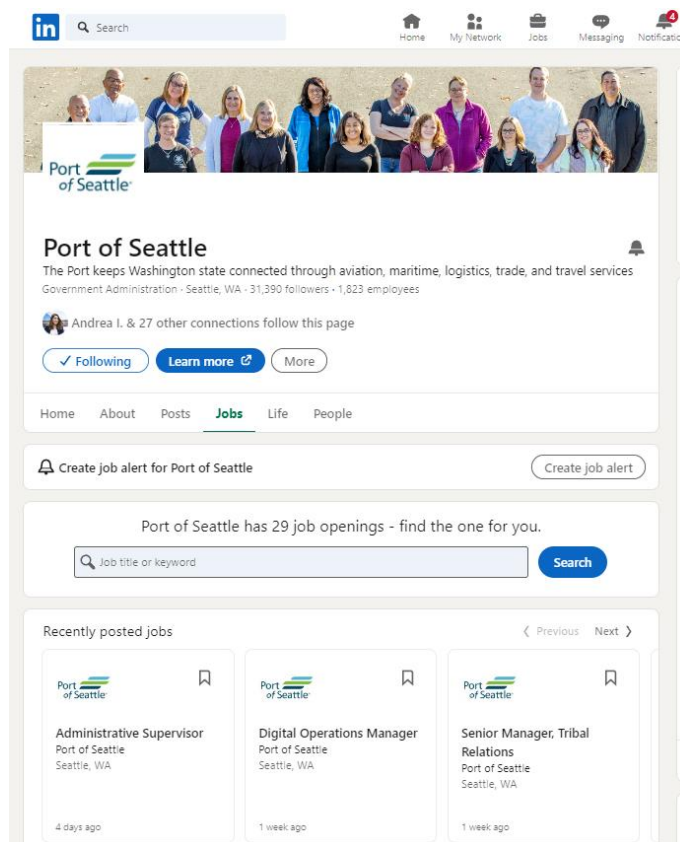
I believe there are so many other stories that need to be told. Now, we can leverage and maximize the use of social media platforms to give employees an opportunity to tell their stories. That can have a tremendous positive impact. That will attract easily more people, especially young talents, to the maritime industry. Also, social media can be used to recruit new talents.

Seaports can use social media platforms to attract and recruit talents, particularly for young professionals. LinkedIn is one of the social media platforms that can be used to leverage the usage of social media platform for workforce development and job creation.

Seaports can share job openings, apprenticeship opportunities, and internships on social media platforms. Engaging with the local community to build support for workforce development efforts and to encourage young talent to consider careers in the maritime industry.

LinkedIn is a perfect example for job search and recruitment. Some seaports use LinkedIn to recruit candidates. The smart strategy will focus on redefining the job search and recruitment process by adding LinkedIn as an official job search for seaports.

This picture below illustrates a LinkedIn page for job search by Port of Seattle. The implementation of AI in social media will make this process more efficient.



The image shows a screenshot of the LinkedIn profile page for the Port of Seattle. The page is displayed in a desktop view. At the top, there is a navigation bar with icons for Home, My Network, Jobs, Messaging, and Notifications. Below the navigation bar is a search bar and a header image featuring a group of people. The profile name is "Port of Seattle" with a tagline: "The Port keeps Washington state connected through aviation, maritime, logistics, trade, and travel services". It also mentions "Government Administration · Seattle, WA · 31,390 followers · 1,823 employees". Below the profile information, there are buttons for "Following", "Learn more", and "More". A navigation menu includes "Home", "About", "Posts", "Jobs", "Life", and "People". A "Create job alert for Port of Seattle" button is visible. A search bar indicates "Port of Seattle has 29 job openings - find the one for you." Below this, a "Recently posted jobs" section lists three job openings: "Administrative Supervisor" (4 days ago), "Digital Operations Manager" (1 week ago), and "Senior Manager, Tribal Relations" (1 week ago).

(Port of Seattle - LinkedIn Page, 2023)

One of the divisions that needs new talents is cargo development. How to use social media to promote cargo activities?

Cargo Development

Social media can play a significant role in cargo development and marketing for seaports. Effective use of social media can help seaports attract new business, engage with existing clients, and promote their services. The cargo division can use statistics to tell so many stories. The cargo division can have regional outreach to be customized to specific market.

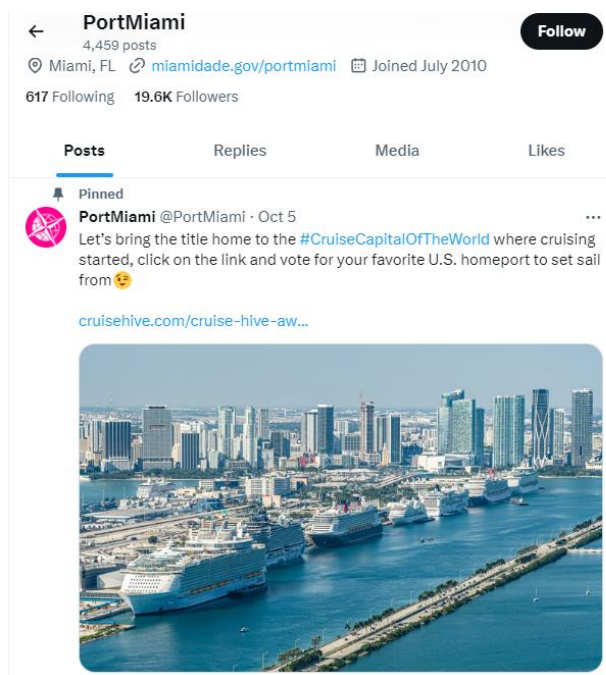
Cargo division can implement a smart approach by publishing every week their stats numbers and analysis. Followers with an interest in trade and logistics can be a targeted audience to initiate a weekly conversation about trade numbers. All the partners, the terminals, the shipping lines can be tagged to be part of the conversation.

Cruise

The cruise industry and seaports can leverage social media in various ways to enhance their operations, marketing, and customer engagement. For example, PortMiami is the cruise capital of the world. It is very efficient to use the tagline and some facts to make a strong statement.

There are so many ways to use cruise for smart strategy on social media platforms.

The post below can indicate the weather and the average of cruise passenger when 7 cruise vessels on board. One story can be told by using many angles.



Community Interest/Engagement

Seaports can use social media to communicate their environmental and sustainability efforts. More strategically, the seaports can lead green initiatives, partner with organizations with the same green agenda, create the narration, and tell the stories via social media platforms.

Community engagement is a critical aspect of the operation and sustainability of seaports. Social media can be a powerful tool for seaports to effectively engage with their surrounding communities. For example, a seaport can partner with local institutions, like schools and environmental organizations to participate in educational and environmental activities.

V. Conclusion

Hopefully port leaders can use the findings of this research paper about seaports and social media to initiate a review of their social media policy. It is important that the social media policy covers all the legal and technical aspects. Also, seaports can follow the lead of the Duluth Seaway Port Authority to include a section of AI in their social media policy.

This research paper can help port professionals to understand and value more strategically the usage of social media platforms as powerful marketing tools that can be leveraged and maximized. It all starts with strong leadership and a clear vision. If social media is a major component of a seaport, it is imperative to define the vision, set up goals, and implement a strategy.

This paper can also start the conversation of a smart strategy to leverage and maximize the usage of social media platforms around economic, social, and environmental impact with a focus on creating contents based on workforce development and job creation, cargo development, cruise, and community interest and engagement.

We are in the era of embracing and maximizing the use of new technology. Technically, we have no choice.

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